

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the present application in view of the amendments to the claims and remarks provided below is respectfully requested.

**Status of the Claims**

Original claims 1-30 have been canceled and new claims 31-37 have been presented herein.

**Claim Rejections under 35 USC 102 and 35 USC 103**

Claims 1-12, 14, 19-22 and 24-27 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Carlucci et al. (US Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0065299).

Claims 28-30 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Luizzi (EP1013291A1). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 13-18 and 23 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carlucci ('299) in view of Luizzi ('291). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Original claims 1-30 have been canceled, thus the Examiner's rejections have been rendered moot. However, to the extent that the Examiner *may* contend that the cited references relate to new claims 31-37, the cited references have been discussed below.

New independent claim 31 sets forth the claimed invention as follows:

31. (New) An absorbent article comprising:  
a body-faceable, liquid-permeable cover layer;  
a substantially transparent, liquid-impermeable barrier layer;  
an substantially transparent liquid absorbing absorbent system arranged between said cover layer and said barrier layer, *wherein said absorbent system is substantially free of cellulosic material* and comprises a mixture of a hot melt adhesive and a liquid-absorbing polymer. (Emphasis Added).

Thus, new independent claim 31 recites, in part, that the claimed absorbent article includes "a substantially transparent liquid absorbing absorbent system arranged between said cover layer and said barrier layer, *wherein said absorbent system is substantially free of cellulosic material* and comprises a mixture of a hot melt adhesive and a liquid-absorbing polymer". (Emphasis Added) It is respectfully submitted that a close review of the cited references reveal that they fail, either singularly or in combination, to disclose and/or suggest an article including such a structure.

US Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0065299 to Carlucci et al. purports to disclose a transparent absorbing article. In one embodiment the absorbent core of said transparent article includes a water based hydrogel adhesive. This reference fails to disclose or suggest the use of a mixture of a hot melt adhesive and a liquid absorbent polymer in the manner of the claimed invention.

EP1013291 to Luizzi discloses a hot melt adhesive mixture that is capable of absorbing aqueous liquids, the mixture may include a liquid absorbing polymer. Luizzi also discloses an absorbent article including such hot melt adhesive mixture, the article having a cover layer 10, barrier layer 20 and an absorbent element 30. The hot melt adhesive mixture 40 adheres the cover 10 to the absorbent element 30. It is noted that Luizzi does not specify that the absorbent element 30 is free of cellulosic material in the manner of the claimed invention nor does Luizzi suggest the use of a hot melt adhesive mixture in a transparent article.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the cited references fail, either singularly or in combination, to disclose and/or suggest an article including "a substantially transparent liquid absorbing absorbent system arranged between said cover layer and said barrier layer, *wherein said absorbent system is substantially free of cellulosic material and comprises a mixture of a hot melt adhesive and a liquid-absorbing polymer*" in the manner of the claimed invention recited in claim 31. Claims 32-37 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 31 and thus are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 31.

Reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to call the applicants' undersigned representative if any further action will expedite the prosecution of the application or if the Examiner has any suggestions or questions concerning the application or the present Response. In fact, if the claims of the application are not believed to be in full condition for allowance, for any reason, the applicants respectfully request the constructive assistance and suggestions of the Examiner in drafting one or more acceptable claims pursuant to MPEP § 707.07(j) or in making constructive suggestions pursuant to MPEP § 706.03 so that the application can be placed in allowable condition as soon as possible and without the need for further proceedings.

Respectfully submitted,

/Paul J. Higgins/

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Paul J. Higgins  
Reg. No. 44,152

Johnson & Johnson  
One Johnson & Johnson Plaza  
New Brunswick, NJ 08933-7003  
(732) 524-1728  
Dated: May 30, 2006